

Remarks on the National Football League's Opening Day Coin Toss
September 9, 2001

We're here in the Rose Garden to help kick off the NFL's 82d season. This is a great day for fans. And I want to salute the NFL for its long history, lasting influence, and the quality of its athletes.

I'm glad to be joined by members of Washington's Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Club—all future NFL greats.

And now, to officially begin the NFL's 82d season, the coin toss. This is heads. This is tails. Here we go.

[At this point, the President tossed the coin.]

It's tails.

I wish the players of the NFL good health, and have a great season.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:01 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Presenting the Bell of the U.S.S. *Canberra* to Prime Minister John Howard of Australia
September 10, 2001

Well, Mr. Secretary, thank you for those generous comments. It reconfirms once again the reason I picked you. [Laughter] I appreciate your service to the Navy, and I appreciate your service to the country.

I'm honored today to join with the Navy to receive a distinguished visitor and to present a symbol of America's esteem. Prime Minister Howard leads a nation that has been our partner in ANZUS for 50 years, and a friend far longer. Mr. Prime Minister and Mrs. Howard, it's a real pleasure to have you with us, and also those of you who made the journey with the Prime Minister. Welcome to America.

My thanks as well to Admirals Clark and Weaver and to all the men and women of the United States military who are with us today. We're sure proud of you.

Those who defend America have always had a special regard for our Australian allies. And I know—I know—they're really proud to show that regard today.

Another reason we chose this site, Mr. Prime Minister, is that we have a gift for you and it's not that easy to move around.

This bell that you are going to receive has traveled for almost 25 years aboard the only American ship ever commissioned in honor of an ally's fallen vessel, the U.S.S. *Canberra*. She no longer sails, but she gave faithful service. And this bell is a reminder of a faithful partner in times of crisis and in times of calm.

U.S.S. *Canberra* received her name at the request of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt at the height of World War II. The President had received word of an exceptional action in battle by the Australian Navy, which were steaming alongside American vessels at Guadalcanal. His Majesty's Australian Ship *Canberra* did not survive the battle, disappearing into the depths where she rests today. It was a great loss of life, and much heroism amongst the Australian sailors and marines on board. As a sign of gratitude to those men and to their country, the U.S.S. *Canberra* was commissioned the very next year, serving my country and honoring yours, Mr. Prime Minister.

One man who served aboard the original *Canberra* was Lieutenant Mackenzie Gregory, and we're greatly honored to have him with us today. Where is Mr. Gregory? Thank you for being here, sir. We're honored to have you. You must have been a young guy. [*Laughter*]

President Roosevelt knew a trustworthy ally when he saw one. Every President since then has felt and known the same esteem for Australia.

Mr. Prime Minister, it was one of your own predecessors, a wartime leader, who captured the spirit that has always made us natural allies. "We work for the same kind of free world," observed Sir Robert Gordon Menzies. "We govern ourselves in democracy, and we will not tolerate anything less. We cherish liberty and hold it safe, providing hope for the rest of the world."

In the century just passed, Australians served side by side with Americans in every major military commitment. In peaceful times like our own, the alliance between our two nations has helped spare the world from other wars and dangers. Australia is a strong and peaceful presence in East Asia and the Pacific.

Australia is a generous land, mindful of the struggles of poorer nations, always helping when and where it can. Your Government and your good people are an example of democracy, individual liberty, and the virtues of free trade amongst all nations.

On this official visit to our country, I know that you will meet with nothing but good will. And in meetings with Congress and my administration, you will find willing partners who understand Australia's importance as a strategic and economic ally. Though half a world apart, we belong to a very close community of values and aspirations.

From this visit, Mr. Prime Minister, I hope that you will take away renewed optimism about our shared future. And I know that you will take with you a parcel weighing approximately 250 pounds. [*Laughter*] It's a fine bell with a great history. And once you get it home, it will always stand as a sign of the unbounded respect of our Nation for the Australian people.

Welcome to America. May God bless Australia, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in Leutze Park at the Historical Washington Navy Yard. In his remarks, he referred to Janette Howard, wife of Prime Minister Howard; Adm. Vernon E. Clark, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; and Rear Adm. Christopher E. Weaver, USN, Commandant, Naval District of Washington. The President also referred to ANZUS, the Security Treaty Between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Howard.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister John Howard of Australia *September 10, 2001*

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us your thoughts, sir, on more tax cuts?

The President. I'm honored the Prime Minister is here. He's a great friend. Australia's a great friend, and we're so honored

he's here. I'm sure we'll have a good, constructive visit. And we've had a great start.

Q. Mr. President, what's your message on education today? Do you have anything to say about education today, Mr. President?